

JUL 02 2025

US DISTRICT COURT  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF NC

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR  
THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF NORTH CAROLINA  
STATESVILLE DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

v.

GENE CHRISTOPHER ACUFF

DOCKET NO. 5:25-cr-31-KDB

**BILL OF INFORMATION**

Violations: 18 U.S.C. § 1341  
18 U.S.C. § 1957

**THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY CHARGES THAT:**

**INTRODUCTION**

At all times material to this Bill of Information:

1. Beginning no later than January 30, 2020, and continuing until on or about June 25, 2024, GENE CHRISTOPHER ACUFF (ACUFF), defendant herein, devised and intended to devise a scheme and artifice to defraud and to obtain more than \$1.9 million from his employer, Company A, by means of materially false and fraudulent pretenses, representations and promises, and by concealment of material facts, which scheme he executed by causing Company A checks to be delivered to a mail box in Mooresville, Iredell County, North Carolina that he controlled. ACUFF also used the proceeds of his fraud to conduct monetary transactions in excess of \$10,000.
2. Company A was a publicly traded retailer with stores in the United States, Canada, and Mexico.
3. ACUFF was employed by Company A for approximately nine years as a senior manager whose duties included reviewing property tax assessments on Company A stores, primarily in North Carolina. ACUFF worked for Company A from his home in Mooresville, North Carolina, from in and around March 2020 until on or about September 4, 2024.
4. In the course of his duties, ACUFF would employ real estate appraisers and other professionals to evaluate tax assessments on Company A stores. Companies providing services to Company A would submit invoices for their services, which were paid through an electronic application. ACUFF was entrusted with access to Company A's bill pay system and had the authority to authorize payments to its vendors. Once authorized, Company A would send checks to vendors via the United States mail at the addresses listed on their invoices.

### **The Scheme and Artifice to Defraud**

5. Beginning no later than January 30, 2020, and continuing until on or about June 25, 2024, ACUFF devised and executed a scheme and artifice to defraud and to obtain money from Company A by materially false and fraudulent statements, and by concealment of material facts, including the following:
  - a. ACUFF created five businesses with names related to real estate appraisal and tax consulting services, which he registered with the North Carolina Secretary of State:
    - i. Appraisal Consulting Services,
    - ii. Fee Simple Valuations,
    - iii. Tax Appraisal Services,
    - iv. Tax Valuation Services, and
    - v. Property Tax Consulting Services.
  - b. ACUFF submitted fraudulent and materially false invoices to Company A in the names of his real estate appraisal and tax consulting businesses for appraisals and other services which were never in fact provided to Company A.
  - c. ACUFF authorized payment of such fraudulent and materially false invoices on Company A's bill pay system, which caused approximately 234 checks to be delivered through the U.S. mails to a box he leased at a commercial mail service in Mooresville, North Carolina.
  - d. ACUFF collected checks totaling more than \$1.9 million from the mailbox he leased in Mooresville, North Carolina, and deposited them into accounts he opened at various banks in the names of Appraisal Consulting Services, Fee Simple Valuations, Tax Appraisal Services, and Tax Valuation Services.
  - e. ACUFF transferred the proceeds of Company A checks deposited into the accounts of his real estate appraisal and tax consulting businesses to his personal bank accounts for his personal benefit and use.

### **The Money Laundering Scheme:**

6. ACUFF caused Company A to mail checks payable to Appraisal Consulting Services, Fee Simple Valuations, Tax Appraisal Services, and Tax Valuation Services to an address in Mooresville, North Carolina, which checks were obtained by false and fraudulent representations, including that they were legitimate vendors that provided Company A services, when in fact they were straw companies controlled by ACUFF that provided no services to Company A.



7. Between on or about March 23, 2021, and July 18, 2024, ACUFF deposited 44 checks totaling \$411,859.36 from Company A into bank accounts in the names of Appraisal Consulting Services, Fee Simple Valuations, Tax Appraisal Services, and Tax Valuation Services. Those accounts were solely funded with checks obtained by fraud from Company A.
8. Between on or about September 20, 2021, and July 1, 2024, ACUFF transferred \$201,000.00 from accounts in the name of Appraisal Consulting Services, Fee Simple Valuations, Tax Appraisal Services, and Tax Valuation Services to his personal accounts at Ally Bank.

**COUNT ONE**  
**18 U.S.C. § 1341**  
**(Mail Fraud)**

9. Paragraphs 1 through 5 of this Bill of Information are hereby realleged and incorporated in Count One by reference herein.
10. Beginning no later than January 30, 2020, and continuing until on or about June 25, 2024, ACUFF devised a scheme and artifice to defraud and to obtain money and property from Company A by materially false and fraudulent pretenses, representations, and promises, and by concealment of material facts, as described in this Bill of Information.
11. On or about April 20, 2022, in Iredell County, in the Western District of North Carolina, and elsewhere, the defendant,

**GENE CHRISTOPHER ACUFF,**

for the purpose of executing and attempting to execute the above-described scheme and artifice to defraud and to obtain money from Company A by materially false and fraudulent pretenses, representations, and promises, and by concealment of material facts, did knowingly cause to be delivered by mail and by private and commercial interstate carrier a check payable to Appraisal Consulting Services in the approximate amount of \$9,500 according to the direction thereon.

All in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1341.

**COUNT TWO**  
**18 U.S.C. § 1957**  
**(Money Laundering)**

12. Paragraphs 1 through 8 of this Bill of Information are hereby realleged and incorporated in Count Two by reference herein.



13. On or about July 12, 2022, in Iredell County, within the Western District of North Carolina, and elsewhere, the defendant,

**GENE CHRISTOPHER ACUFF**

did knowingly engage, attempt to engage, and cause others to engage in a monetary transaction by, through, and to a financial institution, affecting interstate or foreign commerce, in criminally derived property of a value greater than \$10,000, to wit, a wire transfer in the amount of approximately \$171,515.00 from Ally Bank to the Bank of Oklahoma, which involved the proceeds of a specified unlawful activity, that is, mail fraud in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1341, and that while conducting and attempting to conduct such monetary transaction knowing that the property involved in the monetary transaction, that is funds fraudulently received from Company A, represented the proceeds of some form of unlawful activity.

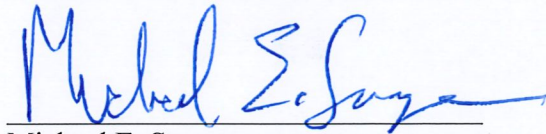
All in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1957.

**NOTICE OF FORFEITURE**

14. Notice is hereby given of the provisions of Title 18, United States Code, Section 981 and 982, 21 United States Code, Section 853, and 28 United States Code, Section 2461(c). Under Section 2461(c), criminal forfeiture is applicable to any offenses for which forfeiture is authorized by any other statute, including but not limited to Title 18, United States Code, Section 981 and all specified unlawful activities listed or referenced in Title 18, United States Code, Section 1956(c)(7), which are incorporated as to proceeds by Section 981(a)(1)(C). The following property is subject to forfeiture in accordance with Sections 981, 982, 853, and/or 2461:
- a. All property which constitutes or is derived from proceeds traceable to the mail fraud violations alleged Count One of this Bill of Information;
  - b. All property involved in such violations or traceable to property involved in the money laundering violation alleged in Count Two of this Bill of Information; and
  - c. In the event that any property described in (a) or (b) cannot be located or recovered or has been substantially diminished in value or has been commingled with other property which cannot be divided without difficulty, all other property of the Defendant, to the extent of the value of the property described in (a) and (b).
15. The following properties are subject to forfeiture on one or more of the grounds stated above:
- a. Approximately \$191,920.81 in funds seized from Bluevine Bank Account XXXXX6084, such account held in the business name of Fee Simple Valuations;

- b. Approximately \$180,104.09 in funds seized from Novo Bank Account XXXXX5552, such account held in the business name of Tax Appraisal Services;
- c. Approximately \$210,236.76 in funds seized from NBKC Bank Account XXXXX3853, such account held in the business name of Tax Valuation Services;
- d. Approximately \$214,992.29 in funds seized from Everbank Account XXXXX0529, such account held in the name of Gene Acuff / Appraisal Consulting Services; and
- e. One 1977 Beech A36 Aircraft, with Registration Number N71KW and Serial Number E-1144, and accompanying logbooks.

RUSS FERGUSON  
UNITED STATES ATTORNEY



Michael E. Savage  
Assistant United States Attorney